

The VA Secretary would brief Congress within a year after passage of the bill and then prepare a report that includes recommendations to address identified disparities.

The companion legislation I sponsored, H.R. 3856, was approved by the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I am pleased to support Senator WARNOCK's legislation today. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1031, sponsored by Senator RAPHAEL WARNOCK. I would also like to recognize Chairman TAKANO for leading this effort in the House.

As you all know, when the men and women of our military sign up to serve, we make a promise to care for them upon their separation, regardless of age, ethnicity, race, or gender.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee has heard concerns from veterans who say that they have been treated unfairly in the VA benefits system based on their minority status. However, we have no objective data to determine whether there is a bias against the minority groups in the VA through the claims process.

S. 1031 would help address this question by requiring a GAO study to determine whether any differences exist in the way the VA administrators compensate benefits based on the veteran's background. This report would provide Congress and VA with the information we need to determine what biases exist and, if so, how to address them.

I support S. 1031, and I hope that my colleagues will do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I, again, ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing S. 1031, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1031.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HIRE VETERAN HEALTH HEROES ACT OF 2021

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 894) to identify and refer members of the Armed Forces with a health care

occupation who are separating from the Armed Forces for potential employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 894

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021".

#### SEC. 2. IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WITH A HEALTH CARE OCCUPATION FOR POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DURING SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 207 of the VA Choice and Quality Employment Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-46; 38 U.S.C. 7401 note) is amended to read as follows:

#### "SEC. 207. IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WITH A HEALTH CARE OCCUPATION FOR POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DURING SEPARATION FROM THE ARMED FORCES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall establish a program to identify and refer members of the Armed Forces with a health care occupation for employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs during the separation of such members from the Armed Forces.

"(b) REFERRAL OF INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—If a member of the Armed Forces identified under subsection (a) expresses an interest in working in a health care occupation within the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall refer the member to a recruiter of the Department for consideration of open positions in the specialty and geography of interest to the member.

"(2) TIMING.—Any referral of a member of the Armed Forces conducted under paragraph (1) shall be made not earlier than one year before the separation of the member from the Armed Forces.

"(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Any identification of a member of the Armed Forces under subsection (a) or referral of such member under subsection (b) shall not be construed as a guarantee of employment of such member with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"(d) REPORTS.—Not later than each of one year and two years after the date of the enactment of the Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the program established under subsection (a).

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term 'appropriate committees of Congress' means—

"(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

"(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

"(2) HEALTH CARE OCCUPATION.—The term 'health care occupation' means an occupation for which an individual may be appointed for employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 7401 of title 38, United States Code."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 894.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Senator BRAUN and Senator HASSAN's S. 894, the Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act.

We all know that there are many ways for our military personnel to continue to serve after they separate from Active Duty. This bill provides a potential pathway for those servicemembers in healthcare occupations to move into careers with VA.

It couldn't come at a better time because we know VA has significant hiring needs to ensure it can continue providing high-quality, timely care to our veterans.

S. 894 directs VA to consult with the Department of Defense and establish a program for identifying separating servicemembers who are interested in healthcare positions at VA. VA would then refer interested servicemembers to VA recruiters for consideration of open positions in the specialty and geographic locations veterans prefer.

I see this as a win-win situation for veterans and for VA, and exactly the kind of ideal employment warm hand-off we all talk about.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 894, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 894, the Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021. This bill was introduced by Senator MIKE BRAUN of Indiana. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) introduced the House companion bill. I thank them both for their efforts on this excellent piece of legislation.

The Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act would help accomplish three important goals:

The first is supporting servicemembers as they transition out of the military.

The second is helping veterans find meaningful work in their civilian lives.

The third is ensuring that VA medical facilities are well staffed to provide timely, high-quality care to veterans.

This bill would require VA to work with DOD to identify separating servicemembers with backgrounds in healthcare, and it would require VA to refer those servicemembers who are interested in working in the VA

healthcare system to recruiters for possible placement in VA medical facilities with open positions.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to support this bill today. I hope all of my colleagues will do the same on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I did have a speaker here that was en route, but I will close.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this bill. I appreciate the people who worked on this bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing this important piece of legislation, S. 894, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 894.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### JENNIFER MORENO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER AND DESIGNATION HONORING KATHLEEN MAE BRUYERE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3665) to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Diego, California, as the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and to support the designation of a component of such medical center in honor of Kathleen Bruyere.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3665

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) As of January 2021, of 1,255 health care facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, two are named for women veterans.

(2) From 2002 through 2006, Jennifer Madai Moreno was an active member of the San Diego High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC), which is a Department of the Army Honor Unit with Distinction, the highest rating by the Army. She was also chosen to be a member of the San Diego Unified School District Brigade Staff. As a high school senior, she rose quickly to become the top junior marksman in California through the Civilian Marksmanship Program.

(3) Moreno accepted a JROTC scholarship to the University of San Francisco (USF) for

Nursing, becoming the first person in her family to go to college. While at USF, she was chosen for Leadership Development Training. She ultimately achieved the highest level of physical fitness in her ROTC unit.

(4) Following her graduation from USF with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 2010, Moreno received her commission in the United States Army as a Second Lieutenant Nurse Corps Officer.

(5) Upon commissioning, Moreno served as a Gold Bar Recruiter from July 2010 to September 2010.

(6) Moreno was chosen to attend and completed the Basic Airborne Course in Fort Benning, Georgia and Army Medical Department Officer Basic Course at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas.

(7) Moreno was then assigned to Madigan Army Medical Center, Joint Base Lewis McCord, Washington in January 2011, where she served as a Clinical Staff Nurse on medical-surgical unit. Moreno earned her certification as a Medical Surgical Registered Nurse in February 2011.

(8) Moreno volunteered for a position with U.S. Army Special Operations Command in 2011. She was selected into the SOC Cultural Support Team program. She was deployed to Afghanistan in June 2013 with the Army's 75th Ranger Regiment.

(9) On October 6, 2013, Moreno was attached to a U.S. Army Ranger unit on a night mission in the Zhari district in Kandahar province to capture a high-value target when four explosive devices were triggered.

(10) During the last moments of Moreno's life, she reportedly heard a call to help a wounded soldier struck by a blast. Moreno did not hesitate to respond to the call for help. As she made her way to help a fallen soldier, she triggered the fifth explosion, which ended her life.

(11) Moreno was the first Nurse CST member to die in action. Part of her legacy is the number of young women coming from medical fields seeking out voluntary assignments to join the CST program.

(12) Moreno was the first combat casualty to be buried at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego since the post-9/11 conflicts began. She received full military honors.

(13) After graduating from college in 1966, Kathleen Mae Bruyere was accepted into U.S. Navy Officer Candidate School, after which she was assigned as an on-campus Navy recruiting officer in California.

(14) Bruyere was named to the staff of Rear Admiral Allen Hill in 1975, becoming the first woman to serve as flag secretary to an admiral.

(15) In January 1976, Bruyere was chosen as one of 12 Women of the Year on the cover of Time Magazine.

(16) In 1977, Bruyere joined five other women officers who sued the United States Secretary of the Navy and the United States Secretary of Defense over restrictions that prevented women from serving on combat aircraft and ships. This led to the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act being struck down as unconstitutional, overturning a ban on women serving at sea.

(17) In 1987, as Special Assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations for women's policy, Bruyere helped conduct an examination of the status of Navy women, including career opportunities and complaints of sexism. The study led to 9,000 sea-duty and command jobs opening up for women on 24 combatant ships.

(18) In 1991, Bruyere was assigned as Commanding Officer for the Navy Recruit Training Command at Orlando, Florida. At the time, it was the Navy's only boot camp that included women. Bruyere oversaw the train-

ing of 30,000 enlistees, one third of them women.

(19) In 1994, Bruyere retired from the Navy as a Captain after 28 years of service.

(20) From 2012 until shortly before her death in September 2020, Bruyere was an active volunteer at Miramar National Cemetery, devoting almost 4,300 hours to helping visitors locate their loved ones' graves and providing information about veterans' burial benefits.

(21) Bruyere was buried at Miramar National Cemetery with full military honors.

(22) In May 2021, a panel of San Diego-area members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and military spouses recommended that the San Diego VA Medical Center be renamed in honor of Jennifer Moreno and an internal space be renamed in honor of Kathleen Bruyere.

#### SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF JENNIFER MORENO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in San Diego, California, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

#### SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DESIGNATION OF MEDICAL CENTER PHYSICAL COMPONENT AFTER KATHLEEN MAE BRUYERE.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should designate a prominent physical space within the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, as designated pursuant to section 2, in honor of Kathleen Mae Bruyere.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3665.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the lives of Army Captain Jennifer Moreno and Navy Captain Kathleen Bruyere. I thank my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN), for introducing this legislation to pay tribute to these two distinguished servicemembers who went above and beyond in their service to this Nation.

When Jennifer Moreno graduated from the University of San Francisco with a nursing degree, she joined the Army. She completed airborne training and served with Special Operations Command. As a cultural support team member, Captain Moreno was tasked with outreach to the Afghan women they encountered.